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## ABSTRACT

A solution for high school male athletes who demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior during competition is discussed. In recent years, there has been an increase in unsportsmanlike conduct among high school athletes, including the use of profanity and obscene gestures, public expressions of dissatisfaction, negative comments, incidents of vandalism, on-court scuffles, and violent occurrences. Data gathered from a pre-test showed that male athletes had a low level of knowledge of the importance of sportsmanlike behavior and that many lacked an ethical code of behavior. Expected outcomes for 30 targeted male athletes from five different teams were: (1) 15 out of 30 athletes will score at least 75 on the post-test; (2) a decrease of warnings, fouls, and technical fouls by one third; (3) a decrease of disqualifications and suspensions by one half, and (4) an increase in the conference sportsmanship average for at least three of the five teams. To achieve these objectives a 32-week Sportsmanship Educational Model was implemented which educated the athletes and held them responsible for their behavior. After implementation of this program, three out of the four outcomes were achieved. Specific recommendations, including the establishment of a moral and ethical code in athletic programs, are given. (LH)

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An Educational Model to Enhance  
Sportsmanship of Male High School  
Athletes During Interscholastic  
Athletic Events

by

Joseph Dominick Nisivoccia

Cluster 72

A Practicum II Report Presented to  
the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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## Abstract

An Educational Model to Enhance Sportsmanship of Male High School Athletes During Interscholastic Athletic Events. Nisivoccia, J.D., 1997: Practicum Report Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Design/Resources/Athlete Assessment/Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire, Pre Test Post Test/Guide Lines of Model.

The dilemma: There was a lack of ethical behavior and sportsmanship among the male high school athletes during interscholastic athletic events. The existing athletic program was not adequately addressing how the athletes should conduct their behavior while involved in sports activity.

This Practicum Report discusses a solution for high school male athletes who demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior during athletic competition. This solution is effective when athletes demonstrate a lack of ethical and moral reasoning in guiding their conduct.

Analysis of the data revealed, overwhelmingly, that a comprehensive educational model to enhance ethical decision making would be a productive solution for male high school athletes who display poor sportsmanship behavior. It also revealed that holding the athletes personally responsible for their actions, after effectively educating them about proper ethics and morality, would increase the sportsmanship behavior in high school athletic events.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

### Description of Community

The community was a middle class suburban town located in the northeastern part of the nation. The 1994 census indicated the town's population was 36,500. The minority population in the town had grown from 5% in 1980, to over 50% in 1997. A 1994 "Home Language Survey," revealed that English was spoken in 50% of the students' homes with a total of 20 languages reported spoken in the other 50% of the households.

### Work Setting

The work setting was a high school grades 9-12. The school system had approximately 4,000 students with about 1,200 of those students at the high school level. The school had 110 teachers on staff with an additional 25 professionals in guidance and administration. The school's student body included 45% white, 35% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 10% African American and 5% described as other nationalities. The school district recognized the impact of its changing population by accepting the opportunity to implement the "Guidelines For Education That Is Multicultural (GEM)." The GEM document and goals were



sponsored by the State's Department of Education, Office of Equal Educational Opportunity. GEM provided a comprehensive framework to assist local districts to meet the state and federal requirements for multicultural education.

The district attempted to provide a comprehensive and flexible program that recognized the need for individual self-realization and for social and civic effectiveness. Offering a diverse program, the system provided the students with the opportunity to develop artistic and creative skills, as well as the command of a body of knowledge which contributes to the development of the total person. The school system was providing its students with the opportunity to develop technical skills with the use of computers and video technology.

The school system offered the entire student body 16 team sports along with a wide variety of clubs and extra curricular activities. The athletic department was a member of the State's Interscholastic Athletic Association and was also a member of a local athletic conference. The school system's philosophy reflected the belief that involvement in sports contributes to the process of educating the youth and improves their mental, emotional, social, and physical health.

The population for this practicum were male high school athletes in grades 10-12. Male athletes from the teams which had the most incidents of unsportsmanlike

conduct in the last season of play were selected.

The target group was 30 selected male athletes, six from each sport, of the five sports which have the greatest problem with unsportsmanlike conduct.

The teaching staff of the school system recognized their responsibility to provide students with a meaningful and relevant educational environment that contributed to their total development. Many knowledgeable, creative and concerned educators tried to provide a stimulating, supportive, disciplined and cooperative environment that encouraged growth of students and fostered the development of their physical, mental, moral, and social potentials as well as the intellectual.

#### Writer's Role

The writer's teaching experience had spanned over 19 years of instructing health and physical education for senior high school students. Holding a Bachelor of Science Degree in health and physical education, the writer was certified to instruct all subjects in elementary and high school physical education. Holding a Masters of Art Degree in educational administration and a Student Assist Counseling Certificate, the writer was also authorized to serve as a school administrator and to counsel students for substance abuse.

The writer was one of 11 health and physical education teachers who were responsible for instructing physical education, health education, and driver's education to

all of the students for 40 minutes each day, five days per week. These classes, which are state required, met for one semester or for five months of the school year. The teachers were responsible for assessing the students in course work, evaluating the programs, and collectively determining the goals and objectives of the physical education curriculum.

The writer's extra curricular responsibilities included the position as head wrestling coach, for the past 12 years, after having spent seven years as the assistant coach. For four years, the writer held the position as the head recreation wrestling coach, for the town's youth. The coaches were responsible for developing the skills of the athletes, their strength, and their conditioning along with the structure, organization, and the conduct of their team. The writer had also been a 20-year, active member of the State's Wrestling Officials Association, along with holding the elected position as the President of the State's Wrestling Coaches Association-Region IV, a position that had been held for the past nine years. As a coach, the writer had been selected twelve times by his peers, local and state newspapers, and a cable T.V. station as, "Coach of the Year" and had been inducted into the state's coaching "Hall of Fame."

This writer was also selected, by a community committee, to serve as a member of the police training

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staff for one of the largest suburban municipalities in the state. The responsibility of this position was to instruct and conduct the Police Agility Test for candidates taking the policeman's training course.

As a youth leader, the writer had guided many fine athletic teams to championship titles and had coached many exceptional athletes to state championship recognition. The writer's efforts had provided many students with entry into outstanding institutions of higher learning. As an educator, the writer hoped to continue to contribute to the achievement of high school students by enhancing their abilities academically, athletically, and socially.

This writer's area of specialization in the Nova Southeastern University's Child and Youth Studies Program was Curriculum Development and Systemic Change.

## Chapter II: Study of the Problem

### Problem Statement

The situation that needed improvement was the lack of ethical behavior and sportsmanship among the male high school athletes during interscholastic athletic events. The existing athletic program was not adequately addressing how the athletes should have been conducting their behavior on and off the playing arena. Sportsmanship in high school athletics was vital and needed to be enforced. According to the National Federation of State High School Associations (1990), "Sportsmanship is essential in order to have a concrete measure of understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity" (p.6). Hon and O'Connor (1994) added to the importance of sportsmanship by suggesting that for the good of the greater society, our high school athletes must learn about the importance of team play and fair play. Frey and Massengale (1988) also emphasized this belief by expressing that the values and behaviors associated with high school athletics are very similar to those values that are important in the American society.

### Problem Description

Many of the high school's athletes were demonstrating a lack of knowledge on sportsmanship by way of unsatis-

factory behavior during practice and competition. Many of the athletes were showing little or no ability to demonstrate proper ethical behavior and to effectively communicate with others. Also, many athletes were demonstrating unsatisfactory ability to think and problem solve issues related to proper sportsmanship behavior.

Compounding this problem was the fact that some athletes were demonstrating a lack of social skill development displaying unsatisfactory interpersonal and intergroup relationship skills, along with a lack of cooperation and ability to compromise. These athletes were not only demonstrating this lack of skill with their teammates and opponents, but also with their classmates and teachers. They were also demonstrating this unsatisfactory behavior with the game officials and the coaching staff.

In recent years, the growth of unsportsmanlike conduct among the high school athletes had resulted in an increased use of profanity and obscene gestures, public expressions of dissatisfaction, negative comments, incidents of vandalism, locker room thefts, and on-court scuffles. When there was great rivalry competition between the teams, there seemed to be more frequent occurrences of violence, fighting and other forms of unethical or unsportsmanlike behavior (Trout, 1987 & Werner, 1990).

#### Problem Documentation

Hard data gathered from a pre test, the Nisivoccia

High School Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire (N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire) (see Appendix A), indicated that male athletes were displaying unsatisfactory levels of sportsmanship. The pre test signified that the athletes had a low level of knowledge on the importance of sportsmanship in high school athletics and of proper sportsmanship etiquette. The pre test also indicated that many of the male athletes lacked an ethical code of moral behavior (see Table 1).

Of the 20 pre test questions, five received responses categorized as ethically extremely undesirable, five received responses categorized as ethically highly undesirable, eight received responses categorized as ethically moderately undesirable, while only two questions received responses categorized as ethically desirable.

In rating the level of ethical desirability for the first 10 questions, the score of the middle response (rating 3) plus the two scores toward the "Totally Agree" side were totaled. If the score of the question totaled 0-7, the response was indicated as ethically desirable because an appropriate amount of responses, by the athletes, were recorded in the desirable section to signify insight into proper sportsmanship behavior. A total of 8-15 indicated a moderately undesirable response, 16-22 indicated a highly undesirable response, and a score of 23-30 indicated an extremely high undesirable response, because an inappropriate amount of responses were recorded

in the undesirable section. For questions #11 to #20, the scores of the middle response plus the two scores toward the "Do Not Agree" side were totaled to calculate the level of ethical desirability.

Table 1

Pre Test Scores of the N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire

Questions	Athlete Responses				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Do Not Agree (Desirable)			Totally Agree (Undesirable)	
1. Cheated to get ahead in the sport.	11	11	6	2	0
2. Used profanity in games and in practice.	0	3	3	8	16
3. Disrespectful to the coach.	16	10	3	1	0
4. Used unnecessary roughness.	2	3	11	8	6
5. Refused to shake hands.	12	10	4	2	2
6. Disrespected the game official.	5	12	5	7	1
7. Desire to win at any moral cost.	0	0	2	9	19
8. Express anger or pain with profanity.	0	0	2	10	18
9. All right to ignore the coach's directive.	12	9	5	2	2
10. Use obscene gestures toward spectators.	0	4	4	6	16

Note: For the first 10 questions, ethical desirability is indicated with responses of #1, #2, or #3.

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Questions	Athlete Responses				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Do Not Agree (Undesirable)		Totally Agree (Desirable)		
11. Followed the rules of the state association.	1	0	6	17	6
12. Rate your sportsmanship behavior.	0	7	11	9	3
13. Rate your communication with the coach.	1	2	12	4	11
14. Rate the importance of sportsmanship in high school sports.	2	6	14	8	0
15. Rate yourself as a role model.	3	6	12	8	1
16. I win without boasting, lose without excuses, and I never quit.	0	3	9	13	5
17. Importance of moral values in relationship to winning.	14	8	5	2	1
18. An athlete should not use alcohol or drugs.	1	7	3	10	9
19. An athlete should not smoke or chew tobacco.	3	2	8	11	6
20. The use of steroids to enhance ability reflects poor sportsmanship.	2	6	10	4	8

Note: For questions #11 to #20, ethical desirability is indicated with responses of #5, #4, or #3.

A Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet (see Appendix B) which records violations of warnings, fouls, and technical fouls indicated that many of the male athletes are not showing proper sportsmanship conduct (see Table 2). The warning and foul column, which recorded less severe penalties of verbal warnings or one point individual infractions, totaled 263 with the basketball team receiving the highest amount of penalties. The technical fouls column, which recorded more severe infractions that followed with a deduction in the individual's score, awarding the opponent a point, deduction of the team's score, or a combination of infractions, totaled 61. In this column, the wrestling team had the highest amount of penalties.

Table 2

Data collected from the Student Athlete Behavioral Sheets

Athletic Teams	Penalties	
	Warnings & Fouls	Technical Fouls
1. Baseball	14	NA
2. Basketball	176	8
3. Soccer	29	17
4. Track	NA	12
5. Wrestling	44	24

Note. The athletic teams consisted of the six players with the lowest sportsmanship rating based on the previous season.

A School Athletic Record Sheet (see Appendix C) regarding disqualifications and suspensions of the athletes during the last athletic season, showed a high rate of improper conduct during athletic events (see Table 3). The School Athletic Record Sheet signified a high level of flagrant misconduct. Flagrant misconduct of an athlete has reciprocal action for the team because the athlete will be disqualified for the rest of the event; there will be a deduction of the team's score; the team will lose the athlete for the next scheduled event, or the team will lose the athlete for several future events.

The Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet (see Appendix D) confirmed a low display of sportsmanship conduct of the targeted group (see Table 4). Collected data from the rankings indicated that the five athletic teams, not only had a low sportsmanship ranking among the schools in the conference concerning their particular sport, but also were a determining factor for the high school to have an extremely low overall sportsmanship ranking. Twice in the last five years, the high school was ranked last in sportsmanship among the 17 schools in the conference with the other years having rankings rated numbers 13, 15, and 16.

Table 3

Data Collected from the School Athletic Record Sheet

Athletic Teams	Penalties	
	Suspensions	Disqualifications
1. Baseball	6	1
2. Basketball	4	2
3. Soccer	4	2
4. Track	3	1
5. Wrestling	10	4

Note: The athletic teams consisted of the six players with the lowest sportsmanship based on the previous season.

Table 4

Data Collected from the Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet

Athletic Team	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	Average
	%-Rank	%-Rank	%-Rank	%-Rank	%-Rank	%
1. Baseball	3.22-12	3.00-15	2.83-17	3.00-13	3.00-17	3.01
2. Basketball	2.90-14	2.89-17	3.06-14	3.21- 5	3.22- 6	3.05
3. Soccer	2.75-16	2.78-14	2.85-14	3.00-17	3.04-13	2.88
4. Track	3.00-12	3.08-12	3.08-12	3.00-16	3.02-12	3.03
5. Wrestling	2.80-14	3.11-12	2.96-17	2.89-17	2.86-16	2.92
School ranking	15th	16th	17th	17th	13th	

Note: Established standard for positive sportsmanship is 3.1

### Causative Analysis

There were a number of causes leading to this problem of poor sportsmanship of male high school athletes. Many of the athletes lacked sufficient knowledge on the concept of sportsmanship which was interfering with their problem solving and decision making skills. It was vital that the athletes were exposed to literature and instructed on skills, in an effort to reach and educate all of them.

The rules and regulations of most interscholastic sports were designed to instruct how the games are to be specifically played. The rules and regulations of most high school sports did not define in much detail, what kind of ethical conduct should be demonstrated, beyond those behaviors which could result in injuries and are considered unsafe or dangerous to the players. The athletic department provided few provisions for the athletes to be educated on proper ethical behavior and on lifetime social skills. The existing structure of the athletic program did not encourage the athletes to train their behavior, during practice sessions or competition, according to values that stressed both the importance of proper sportsmanship and that of triumph.

Most of the coaches were not adequately trained to effectively prepare the athletes on proper ethical behavior. Others were not enforcing the established code of sportsmanship developed by the State's Athletic Association. Some coaches had indicated that they were

uncomfortable dealing with value education or that they lacked the necessary resource materials. Other coaches had suggested that because of the counter-effects of parents, professional athletes, the mass media, and our current society, it was a losing battle trying to develop a value system in their athletes (Martin & Roll, 1996).

In recent years, many of the athletes were demonstrating a greater lack of ability to interact and communicate productively. Also, there was a general lack of respect among the athletes toward the coaches and the referees. Our athletic program was just beginning to recognize the need to address the students' lack of interpersonal and intergroup relationship skills.

The inability on the part of some of the athletes to control their anger or disappointment when they felt that they had been treated unfairly or when they disagreed with the decision of a coach or official had also increased, sometimes resulting in acts of violence. With some of the athletes, their low self-esteem caused them to be strongly self-critical which reflected their critical harshness of others. Other athletes had not developed effective communication skills needed to express their own feelings to productively interact with others. The school needed to engage in a more demanding role in these areas where the athletes were lacking. Ravitch (1992) expressed that in today's society there is a greater need

for the teacher and the coach to assume the role of a parent by providing structure for the child on social skill development as well as with academics.

Most of the coaches in this writer's school were not structuring their practice sessions to provide sufficient amounts of individual and group interaction that encourages and teaches the students how to cooperate and get along properly. A great deal of high school practice time was geared toward the aggressive instructional approach to athletic preparation.

In today's society, there seemed to be a tremendous amount of violence and unethical behavior in professional and collegiate sports, which had a negative impact on the behavior of high school athletes. The message that television sent to the high school athletes reinforced this negative effect. The mass media tended to focus on the unacceptable behavior of the professional and college athletes and sent the message that poor sportsmanship is acceptable and exciting.

#### Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

A review of the literature showed that other educators had been concerned with the problem of unsportsmanlike conduct of high school athletes in interscholastic athletic events. Research by Bowen (1987) revealed that more than 90 percent of the nation's people believe that morals have fallen and that there exists a general lack of ethics and positive examples of morality in our society. Bennett

(1988) described many of today's youth as "moral illiterates." Hon and O'Connor (1994) suggested that for the good of the greater society, high school athletes need to be taught the importance of team play and about fair play. Beller and Stoll (1993) reported that sportsmanship, in the classic sense, may no longer exist. Sullivan (1993) elaborated on this disclosure when he reported that proper sportsmanship in high school athletics has gone out of our common belief system.

In the past few years, the athletic department of this writer's school had focused more attention on the subject of sportsmanship. However, the incident of unsportsmanlike conduct had increased sufficiently which indicated that the problem was not being addressed effectively. Instructional time allocated to value education, proper ethical behavior, or sportsmanship was believed to be as important as any other educational aspect. A commitment to value development should not only include the provisions of adequate resources and time allocation, but also should include a quality educational approach. Although this writer's school had made some strides in meeting the value development needs of the students, much more needed to be accomplished in teaching issues on ethical behavior.

The present athletic department needed to develop a more effective means to meet the needs of all of the athletes in order to improve the quality of their behavior.

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Frey and Massengale (1988) indicated that the structure of modern interscholastic sports at all levels does not permit the implementation of the values traditionally associated with athletes. Deline (1991) believed that, "many high school students have not been provided with opportunities to practice strategies that are necessary to deal with the complexities of social interaction" (p.21). Deline (1991) added to his disclosure when he documented that many of the high school students and athletes have not been exposed to cooperative values in their home and in their educational environment. Crawford (1986) reinforced the belief that athletic values are in disarray when he traced the problem to the fact that families are failing to assist their children in learning respect for rules, authority, and self-discipline. National and state studies have recorded a decline in the moral behavior of high school athletes and indicated an increase in unsportsmanlike conduct resulting in disqualifications and suspensions. Schindler (1988) documented, in his report in the National Federation of High School Associations, that it is evident there is a deterioration in acceptable conduct of players and the quality of sportsmanship is not at an acceptable level. Acting on charges of reported incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct by the National Federation Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity Committee (1990), many state athletic associations established a plan to enhance ethical behavior

among their athletes. However, in many states these plans had not reduced the incidents of poor behavior among the athletes. Bartlett and Luck (1993) provided evidence that good conduct rules for proper sportsmanship in high school athletics were prevalent in this country, but their rules were not effective in their designed role.

Many of today's sports sociologists believed that the moral standards and conduct of high school athletes reflected those in society (Ostro, 1987). Crawford (1986) suggested that a non-basic traditional human value system had caused sports to lose its integrity. Matson (1996) expressed that societal changes have altered ethics in sports, especially the lack of respect for other people and towards authority. Schindler (1988) indicated that today's high school sports and the desire to win have eroded the basic values the game teaches and has also provided behavior in athletes that ignores proper sportsmanship.

Although national, state, and local high school athletic associations had increased their emphasis on sportsmanship, not much benefit had occurred. A common belief is that the lack of proper behavior displayed by professional athletes along with the lack of role models for our youth, had a large effect on the decline in behavior. Research by Charley (1996) indicated that poor sportsmanship, in part, is the result of the effects of professional and collegiate athletes on high schools.

Charley expanded on this finding by expressing that the national media sends the message to high school athletes that poor sportsmanship conduct is acceptable behavior.

Current research had indicated that many of the high school students were lacking in social skill development. Their ability to communicate and interact productively in interpersonal and intergroup situations was unsatisfactory. Research by Schultz (1990) indicated that today's students have few social skills for working constructively in groups. Berman (1990) expressed concern that young people in today's schools were withdrawing from active participation in our society and were preoccupied with their own needs and desires. Many high school students do not know instinctively how to interact effectively with adults or their peers. Proper and effective interpersonal and group communication skills do not automatically appear when the situation warrants the need. Johnson and Johnson (1990) noted that students need guided direction to develop their social skills and then must be motivated by their educators to use them.

### Chapter III: Anticipated Outcomes and Evaluation Instruments

#### Goals and Expectations

The projected goals and expectations for this practicum were that proper sportsmanship conduct would be demonstrated by the 30 targeted male student athletes during interscholastic athletic events. The needs of these high-risk athletes would be met with quality information and high expectations. All of the targeted athletes would successfully achieve the skills associated with ethical behavior and would demonstrate sportsmanship with their teammates, in the practice room, and with their opponents on the playing arena. The athletes would also demonstrate proper sportsmanship behavior toward the coaching staff and toward the referee, in response to calls and direction. All of the athletes would acquire subject matter knowledge on sportsmanship etiquette that would allow them to think and develop their problem solving and decision making skills for situations and issues associated with sportsmanship. The athletes would successfully achieve the talents required for the practicing of ethical behavior, integrity, and proper sportsmanship. The athletes would demonstrate social skill development by

displaying positive interpersonal and intergroup relationship skills, demonstrating the ability to cooperate and compromise with others.

### Expected Outcomes

The following student outcomes were projected for this problem solving practicum.

1. The athletes will increase their knowledge on the importance of sportsmanship in high school athletics. Out of the 30 selected athletes, 15 will achieve the desired acceptable score of 75 percent on the post test, N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire. Also, 15 out of the 30 athletes would increase their overall score by 10 points (see Appendix A). The students will reach this outcome by answering the questions in a more appropriate manner conducive to the meaning of proper sportsmanship. Their responses on three out of the five questions which received the lowest ratings on the pre test will be higher. These questions are #2, #7, #8, #10, and #17 (see Table 1).
2. There will be a decrease in the amount of warnings, fouls, and technical fouls received by the athletes. The Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet (see Appendix B) will indicate that warnings, fouls, and technical fouls decreased by one-third the amount.

3. There will be a decrease in the amount of disqualifications and suspensions. The school Athletic Record Sheet (see Appendix C) will indicate that the disqualifications and suspensions of the athletes were decreased by one-half the amount. No more than five disqualifications or suspensions involving the athletes per team will take place during the season.
4. There will be an increase in the conference sportsmanship averages of the five athletic teams. The Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Record Sheet (see Appendix D) will indicate that three out of the five targeted teams will receive a sportsmanship average that is .4 percent higher than the average of their percentages of the last five years. Also, the desired level of moderate, or an average of 3.1 to 3.3 will be recorded on the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Rating Scale (see Appendix E) for three out of the five targeted teams.

#### Measurement of Outcomes

The N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used to assess the students' level of knowledge on sports ethics. An appropriate level of acquired sportsmanship information would be measured by achieving a score of 75 percent out of a possible score of 100. After the implementation of the N.H.S. Educational Model to improve sportsmanship, 15 out of the 30

athletes would reach the appropriate level of acceptable knowledge on sports ethics.

By the athletes accomplishing their individual goals of acquiring knowledge on sports ethics and displaying proper sportsmanship behavior, they would insure the success of the project. Out of the 30 athletes, 15 would achieve their individual goal by controlling their behavior throughout the season.

The Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet (see Appendix B) was used to record interaction between the athletes and their teammates, their opponents, the coaching staff, and the officials. A measurement of scores, one-third the amount of the previous season in the warning and foul column and one-fourth the amount in the technical foul column, would show an improvement in social skill development of the athletes.

It was essential that the athletes displayed effective interpersonal and intergroup communication skills by cooperating and negotiating ideas and differences in order to reach the specific student outcomes.

The School Athletic Record Sheet (see Appendix C) was used to measure the amount of student disqualifications and suspensions throughout the athletic seasons. A measurement of scores one-half the amount of the previous season would indicate an improvement in sportsmanship and integrity.

The Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet (see Appendix D) was used to measure the ethical conduct of the five targeted athletic teams. Sportsmanship rankings of the teams with averages in the moderate range of 3.1 to 3.3, would indicate a development in sportsmanship.



## Chapter IV: Solution Strategy

### Statement of Problem

The problem to be solved in this practicum was to improve the lack of ethical behavior and sportsmanship among the male high school athletes during interscholastic athletic events. Many of the high school's athletes were demonstrating a lack of knowledge on sportsmanship by way of unsatisfactory behavior during practice and competition. Many of the athletes were showing little or no ability to display proper ethical behavior and to effectively communicate with others. Also, many athletes were exhibiting unsatisfactory ability to think and problem solve issues related to proper sportsmanship behavior. Many of the athletes were demonstrating a lack of social skill ability to cooperate and compromise effectively.

The existing athletic program had not been effective in addressing how the athletes should conduct their behavior on and off the playing arena.

### Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

A number of possible solutions were gleaned from the literature to enhance the ethical behavior among high school athletes. The school district's curriculum could

have been restructured with a focus on value education and character development, which would boost ethical behavior, integrity, and sportsmanship. Beller and Stoll (1993) believed there is an urgent need for schools to implement moral character development in the curriculum to enhance ethical decision making skills and sportsmanship. Crawford (1986) suggested that a school's curriculum which instructs the students in morality and character development may instill in our children those traits that are so desperately needed in our society and in athletics.

A more specific solution to the problem of unsportsmanlike conduct of athletes was to restructure the school's physical education curriculum with a focus on value and moral education. Research by Beller and Stoll (1993) suggested that a practical consideration to solving the dilemma of poor sportsmanship is to use the physical education class to foster moral character development. Morris (1993) elaborated on this idea by indicating that a student-centered physical education curriculum that enables the students to develop cooperative behaviors will help them adopt social responsibility and proper sportsmanship behavior.

The school's athletic department could have utilized and emphasized the sportsmanship code of the National Federation of State High School Associations in order to reduce unsportsmanlike conduct. Stoll (1992)

recommended that schools should be affiliated with the National Federation of State High School Associations, and utilize the established sportsmanship code document. Bartlett and Luck (1994) revealed that a large number of state associations report that they believe good athletic conduct rules are effective in helping students to practice sportsmanship.

The sportsmanship and ethics of high school athletes could have also been developed through the actions and role of the coach. Beller and Stoll (1993) indicated a possible effective solution to unsportsmanlike behavior would be to develop workshops designed to raise an awareness of the role and responsibility of the coach in promoting and maintaining proper behavior. Many athletes are strongly influenced by the actions, beliefs, and directions of their coach. Coaches are very influential role models for high school athletes, and for many of today's students the only role model they may have. Research by Trout (1987) indicated the conduct of athletes is related to the leadership demonstrated by their coaches. Halford (1989) added to this fact by expressing that values are constantly transmitted to players, consciously or unconsciously, by the coach and many players will adapt the coach's values into their own lives.

Sportsmanship and ethics of high school athletes could have also been structured and developed through the role of the game official. Research by Charley (1996)

focused on the official's role in developing sports ethics with an emphasis on preventative measures as key.

Schindler (1988) pointed out that in order to develop sportsmanship in high school athletics, officials must consistently penalize athletes for unsportsmanlike acts whenever they occur and not allow poor conduct to be overlooked or tolerated.

An approach to sportsmanship which held the high school athletes personally responsible for proper conduct could have produced many important and positive effects on their behavior. Stiehl (1993) expressed that athletes need to become personally responsible for fulfilling their obligations, keeping commitments, supporting one another, and striving to be their personal and moral best. Lickona (1991) also supported this idea of personal responsibility in athletes for sportsmanship, describing responsibility as incorporating both healthy personal development and caring interpersonal relationships. Stiehl (1993) elaborated on this theory indicating that by holding the athlete personally responsible for their actions incorporates the key notion that responsibility is a voluntary act that involves choice and is not imposed from the outside. A key aspect to increase the possibility that the athletes will accept and support the change is to get them involved in the design process. Kohn (1991) suggested that the coaches should guide their athletes so that they will have a role in making decisions about how their behavior

will be and why. With proper guidance, children are adequate choice-making individuals who are capable of accepting responsibility for their own actions and the consequences of poor sportsmanship behavior (Morris and Stiehl, 1991).

#### Description of Selected Solution

The literature offered an array of possible solutions on enhancing sportsmanship, integrity, and ethical conduct of high school athletes. The most appropriate solution for this writer's situation was to use an approach which educated the athletes and then held them personally responsible for their conduct. A sportsmanship educational model was incorporated into the sport's season so that the athletes developed their social values and skills while they developed their athletic talent, technique, strength, and conditioning. This writer's N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model provided the athletes with essential information through a comprehensive approach that included a well planned reference handbook, audio-visual aids, speakers, and group discussions. The athletes were able to increase their knowledge on sports etiquette which allowed them to develop their problem solving skills and enabled them to make wise decisions while at practice, athletic events, or while they were off the playing field. Productive student interaction was stimulated by encouraging positive interpersonal and intergroup communication through cooperation and compromise.

This N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model not only provided the athletes with vital information, but also provided examples of appropriate sportsmanship behavior, guidance of suitable conduct, and an assist person for direction and support. The sportsmanship reference handbook was a collection of articles and stories on morality in athletics. Areas covered were the benefits of high school athletics, the role and responsibility of the coach and game official, and socially acceptable standards of sports behavior. Continuous workshops on sportsmanship were provided for the targeted athletes which involved discussion, audio-visual aids, speakers, and reviews of the planned resource. In addition to the process of educating the athletes, workshops for professional development were provided for the coaching staff on the importance of their role in developing, encouraging, modeling, and maintaining high standards of ethical conduct for their athletes. This addition had a profound effect on assisting the change process. The following were projected objectives for the coaches professional development:

1. Recognition of the importance of ethics in athletics and the coach's role in educating their athletes.
2. Understanding of the importance of enforcing the established code of sportsmanship developed by the State Athletic Association.
3. Identification of specific kinds of sportsmanship-like behaviors which should be demonstrated by high school athletes.

4. Awareness of educational strategies that effectively prepare the athletes on ethical conduct.

There was strong evidence which indicated that this selected solution of educating the athletes and then holding them personally responsible for their behavior would be successful (Beller & Stoll, 1993; Kohn, 1991; Lickona, 1991; Morris, 1993; Morris & Stiehl, 1991; and Stoll, 1992). Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1932), who stressed the progressive cognitive developmental theory of learning, believed that adolescents actively construct their own cognitive worlds. He emphasized that the adolescent conforms his or her thinking to include new ideas and concepts and that the additional information furthers their understanding and thoughts. Piaget conceived knowledge as a process of acting. To know something is to act on it, with the action being physical, mental or both. Piaget (1932) believed that assimilation is the process of understanding and accommodation is the incorporation of new experiences in life into existing experiences. Bruner (1959) added to Piaget's theory when he expressed that to know how things are related means learning the structure of knowledge. The student, who understands how parts of information within a subject area are related, is able to relate and apply additional information to the subject matter. Although the initial formulation of the cognitive-developmental perspective on morality was presented by Piaget (1932), the theory was expanded by Kohlberg (1976).

It is Kohlberg's work that is more relevant to the study of value autonomy during adolescence and to the focus of sportsmanship behavior. Kohlberg (1968) suggested that moral development is an aspect of socialization with socialization being a process by which children learn to conform to the rules and regulations of their culture. Thomas (1996) added to the theory of moral development indicating that if children think the consequences of a particular act will be contrary to their welfare, they will avoid the act. Research by Rest, Davison, and Robbins (1978) provided support that value autonomy grows during adolescence, particularly during the later years. Teenagers are able to reason about moral problems in an advanced way. However, their behavior needs to be consistent with their reasoning. Research by Walker, de Vries, and Trevethan (1987) indicated that adolescents reason about life's dilemmas in ways parallel to their reasoning about moral dilemmas that they actually encountered in their life. Kohlberg's (1976) moral developmental theory model provided some considerable understanding on how people think about abstract dilemmas of life. Rest (1983) provided understanding about the way people behave when they find themselves in situations that evoke moral consideration. A child's behavior is related to the way in which he or she reasons about hypothetical moral dilemmas. Individuals who are capable



of reasoning at higher stages of moral thought are less likely to commit antisocial acts and engage in unethical or unsportsmanlike behavior.

Stiehl (1993) indicated that high school students are capable of accepting responsibility for their own actions and for the consequences of their own behavior. He added to this disclosure by expressing that responsibility is a voluntary act and internally motivated, which involves the adolescent to make a choice. Both students and athletes have the ability to be held accountable for making wise choices about what they will do and not do, provided they obtain the knowledge and support necessary to nurture responsibility and ethical decision making.

Many schools around our nation were producing students who became self-directed learners and who took a part in their own learning process. Today's high school athletes also needed to become autonomous learners who are flexible, adaptable to change, and have a sense of morality and integrity. According to Morris (1993), "Students must invest in ownership of their education, and school programs must purposefully promote responsible action and yield students who are respectful, responsive, and accountable" (p.37). Research by Morris (1993) suggested that a student centered approach to educating adolescents which provides information and that enables

all of the students to develop cooperative behaviors can help the students to be responsible and develop a moral sense of behavior.

Evidence also indicated that professional developmental workshops for the coaching staff would have been successful. The social learning theory of child development believes that much of what children learn comes from their active imitating or modeling what they see and hear others say and do. The information that children acquire enables them to decide how the observed behavior helps or hinders them in fulfilling their future needs (Thomas, 1996). Bandura (1969) viewed imitation as a major device in a child's social development, for through observations of models, children add to their behaviors. He saw consequences as regulators of future behavior providing children with information and motivation. Rotter (1954) elaborated on this view by pointing out the importance of reinforcement. He suggested that reinforcement communicates consequences of a behavior will apply on future behavior in similar circumstances.

#### Report of Action Taken

In order to accomplish the goals and objectives of this practicum, detailed planning was essential. Cooperation from the athletic department, the athletes, and the coaching staff of the five selected sports was needed.

The first step was to acquire permission from the school's principal and the district's assistant superintendent to implement a 32 week educational model to enhance the sportsmanship of male athletes. Providing these administrators with a copy of the proposal was sufficient in obtaining their support and approval. A concern that the assistant superintendent had was which particular athletes and which teams were going to be selected for implementation. This writer indicated that the five male sports with the lowest rating of sportsmanship in the athletic conference would be selected and six athletes from each team with the highest amount of penalties, suspensions, and disqualifications for poor sportsmanship, would be selected as the target group.

In preparing for the project's implementation, the writer began the process of collecting resources on sportsmanship. Catalogues of audio-visual materials and guest speakers were gathered. The planned sportsmanship reference handbook was structured and organized into five sections which included "The Benefits of High School Athletics," "Sportsmanship, Ethics, & Integrity," "The Coaches Corner," "The Game Official," and "The Decline of Sportsmanship." An extra section entitled, "Additional Information on Sportsmanship" was structured for supplemental material. An innovative book cover entitled, "Sportsmanship: The Mark of a Champion" was designed, the book's pages were correlated and photo copied, and

50 reference handbooks were binded. Inspirational audio-visual materials were ordered and guest speakers were contacted for influential talks with the athletes on socially acceptable conduct.

Extra facilities and supplies were required for implementation to occur. The school's librarian and the town's public librarian were notified to assist on acquiring resources. Computer data bases and State Athletic News Reports were searched for additional resources. The National Federation of State Athletic Associations was contacted to acquire further information on sportsmanship.

The use of the print shop's facilities and supplies were needed and granted for the cover, while use of the school's photo copy machine was permitted for making multiple page copies of the handbook. Also, the use of the school's book binding equipment was obtained and 50 three-quarter inch bindings were purchased.

The first seminar was very crucial for the athletes who did not have a clear understanding of the concept of "ethics in sports." The first step was to review the purpose and objectives of sportsmanship by way of lecture, discussion, and question and answer. The students were then informed of their expectations. The sportsmanship handbooks were distributed to the target group athletes and an explanation of the project's goals were discussed.

After obtaining permission from the administration, the athletes, and the parents to administer the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Questionnaire, the pre test was given, scored, and the results were charted. Many of the athletes and coaches were interested and amazed with the results of the pre test. Most members of the target group had discovered something that was not known prior such as their lack of knowledge on sportsmanship and their low ethical standard of athletic behavior.

Group and individual meetings with the athletes, the principal, and the Board of Education took place to discuss the project plan, the projected goals, and to review the subject matter of the sportsmanship reference handbook.

At this point, the records gathered were reviewed along with the organization and structure of the project. A reflection on the quality of the collected information took place with no revisions resulting.

The first sportsmanship seminar was presented for the athletes. Also, a professional developmental workshop for the coaches occurred to educate them on their role in structuring, maintaining, modeling, and enforcing proper sports ethics for their athletes. The writer attended numerous athletic games to observe behavior and record data. This writer also assumed the role as a sportsmanship-assist person to help the athletes achieve their goals. Other seminars and workshops on sportsmanship

development followed discussing the information in the designed handbook. Audio-visual aids were used to view proper conduct and poor conduct of athletes during athletic competition. Inspirational guest speakers were also used to address the topic of morality in sports. The coaches and the parents were welcome to attend all of the sportsmanship seminars. During the seminars, the athletes were provided with game situations that required them to think and problem solve issues on sportsmanship. The problems were provided for the athletes orally, written, and with the use of audio-visual aids. The athletes were provided with relevant examples of positive sportsmanship behavior of high school, college, and of professional athletes. This learning method of analyzation and evaluation of situations and behaviors stimulated a higher order of thinking and learning.

During the last seminar, all of the coaches and athletes met in a large session to share thoughts and ideas. The post test was administered, scored, and the results were charted, analyzed, and measured with the pre test scores to determine the athletes' knowledge and sportsmanship achievement.

The writer used a variety of direct and indirect approaches developed in graduate school to initiate the implementation process of this educational learning model to enhance sportsmanship. This writer, acting more in the capacity as a facilitator and an assist person than

a traditional teacher or coach, used all possible leadership skills to assist the athletes and coaches to meet the challenges of this project. The writer made all possible efforts to guide the athletes to achieve their goals and to ultimately be successful. Constant feedback and positive recognition was provided to the athletes to stimulate their self-esteem, interest, and motivation.

Throughout the school year, this writer continued to act as a sportsmanship-assist person and attended athletic events to show interest, support, and to help evaluate situations and keep records. It was hoped that this practicum would provide significant insight into meeting the needs and challenges of the athletes so that they would make wise, moral, and social decisions and display proper sportsmanship behavior in interscholastic athletic competition.

## Chapter V: Results

### Results

Male high school athletes were demonstrating a lack of ethical behavior during interscholastic athletic events. Many of the athletes were demonstrating unsatisfactory ability to think and problem solve issues related to proper sportsmanship behavior. The present athletic program was not adequately addressing how the athletes should conduct their behavior on and off the competitive arena. Most of the coaches were not adequately trained to effectively prepare the athletes on proper ethical behavior. In addition, some athletes were demonstrating a lack of social skill development displaying unsatisfactory interpersonal and intergroup relationship skills. Also, they were displaying a lack of cooperation and ability to compromise and control their anger.

The goal of this practicum was that proper sportsmanship conduct would be demonstrated by the 30 targeted male athletes during interscholastic athletic events. The 30 athletes, from the five different teams, would successfully achieve the talents required for the practice of ethical behavior, integrity, and proper sportsmanship.



The solution was to meet the needs of the high risk athletes with relevant and meaningful information, support, and high expectations. This design was formulated to develop the athletes' character by enhancing their knowledge on values and ethics and by increasing their problem solving and decision making skills for situations and issues associated with athletic competition.

This sportsmanship educational model was designed to show that the values, ethics, and interactions associated with sports are equivalent to the values, ethics, and interactions of everyday life. The theoretical perspective of this design can be seen in the teaching of John Dewey (1897). He believed that life and the curriculum should be synonymous and that children should be taught in a way that is meaningful in terms of everyday living. Dewey suggested that a curriculum which fails to address relevancy to the students could not mobilize the students' commitment or best effort. He believed that the more widely the curriculum drew from the student's mind and thought, the greater the impact it had. Bunting's (1987) interpretation of Dewey, suggested that if a student could encounter information within the context of a problem that challenged critical thinking and evaluation then effective learning could take place to structure desired behavior. Dewey considered the authority of teachers or coaches to be an important and positive force in the lives of students. However, he believed that in order

to reach autonomy, students or athletes need to develop authority over themselves and gain self-discipline.

The N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire was presented to the student athletes before implementation (see Appendix A). The same test was given to the 30 male student athletes after implementation of the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model, to see if there was a significant difference in their knowledge, thinking, and problem solving abilities.

A Student Athletic Behavioral Sheet was designed to collect penalty data on warnings, fouls, and technical fouls (see Appendix C). Also, a School Athletic Record Sheet was completed for each athletic team to gather information on suspensions and disqualifications that were associated with acts of unsportsmanship (see Appendix B). Analysis of penalty data prior and after the implementation of the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model took place to see if the objectives of this practicum were met.

Finally, an Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet was designed to gather the teams' sportsmanship averages for the past five seasons (see Appendix D). This sheet also indicated the high school's overall sportsmanship ranking within the athletic conference. It was designed to see if there was development in each of the athletic teams' sportsmanship average and ranking after the implementation of the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model.

The score of the N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire, the results of the School Athletic Behavioral Sheet, the School Athletic Record Sheet, and the Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet were analyzed to see if the data indicated that specific student outcomes were met. The results of the data are presented below.

#### 1. Outcome One

Fifteen out of the 30 targeted male athletes would increase their knowledge on the importance of sportsmanship by achieving a desired ethically acceptable score of 75 percent on the N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire (see Appendix A). The 15 out of 30 athletes would reach this outcome by increasing their overall test score by 10 points. The post test questions would be answered in a more ethically appropriate manner conducive to the meaning of sportsmanship. Next, three out of the five questions, which received the lowest rating on the pre test, would be higher. These questions were #2, #7, #8, #10, and #17.

This outcome was met in that 15 out of 30 of the targeted athletes achieved an acceptable score of 75 percent or higher on the N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire. In addition, 24 out of the 30 athletes increased their overall test score by 10 points and three out of the five questions, which received the lowest rating on the pre test were scored higher on the post test (see Table 5). Outcome one was met with much better results

than expected. A total of 27 athletes obtained a post test score of 75 percent or higher, along with 24 out of the 30 athletes increasing their post test scores by 10 points or more. Also, the athletes answered all five of the questions, which received an extremely high undesirable rating on the pre test, more ethically appropriate. Before implementation only 3 out of the 30 athletes reached a score of 75 percent, while 5 questions received responses categorized as ethically extremely undesirable. Five of the 20 questions were categorized as ethically highly undesirable, eight were moderately undesirable, while only two responses were rated ethically desirable. After implementation, there were no sportsmanship questions receiving an extremely high undesirable rating. Only one question was rated high. Eight were rated moderate, and 11 questions had responses which rated them ethically desirable.

Table 5

Post Test Scores of the N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship  
Questionnaire

Questions	Athlete Responses				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Do Not Agree (Desirable)		Totally Agree (Undesirable)		
1. Cheated to get ahead in the sport.	23	6	0	1	0
2. Used profanity in games and in practice.	2	16	5	5	2
3. Disrespectful to the coach.	21	7	1	1	0
4. Used unnecessary roughness.	6	15	6	3	0
5. Refused to shake hands.	24	5	1	0	0
6. Disrespected the game official.	18	8	3	0	1
7. Desire to win at any moral cost.	4	12	4	8	2
8. Express anger or pain with profanity.	9	10	9	1	1
9. All right to ignore the coach's directive.	16	12	2	0	0
10. Use obscene gestures toward spectators.	18	8	4	0	0

Note: For the first 10 questions, ethical desirability is indicated with responses of #1, #2, or #3.

Questions	Athlete Responses				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Do Not Agree (Undesirable)		Totally Agree (Desirable)		
11. Followed the rules of the state association.	0	0	2	7	21
12. Rate your sportsmanship behavior.	0	1	11	8	10
13. Rate your communication with your coach.	0	0	5	10	15
14. Rate the importance of sportsmanship in high school sports.	0	1	6	11	12
15. Rate yourself as a role model.	0	4	11	8	7
16. Rating: Win without boasting, lose without excuses, and never quit.	0	3	8	10	9
17. Importance of moral values in relationship to winning.	0	9	9	4	8
18. An athlete should not use alcohol or drugs.	0	2	4	7	17
19. An athlete should not smoke or chew tobacco.	0	0	5	7	18
20. The use of steroids to enhance ability, reflects poor sportsmanship.	0	2	2	6	20

Note: For questions #11 to #20, ethical desirability is indicated with responses of #5, #4, or #3.

## 2. Outcome Two

There would be a decrease in the amount of warnings, fouls, and technical fouls received by the 30 targeted athletes. The Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet (see Appendix B) would indicate that warnings, fouls, and technical fouls decreased by one-third the amount from the previous season. This outcome was met in that the penalty violations of the athletes decreased by one-third the amount from the previous athletic season (see Table 6). Prior to implementation, the Athletic Behavioral Sheet (see Appendix B) indicated that the 30 athletes were responsible for a high amount of penalties, totaling 324 infractions. After implementation of the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model, the penalties related to unsportsmanlike conduct totaled 174. The amount of penalties due to unethical behavior decreased by 150 infractions (see Table 6).

Table 6

Data Collected from the Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet

Athletic Team	Penalties	
	Warnings & Fouls	Technical Fouls
1. Baseball	9	NA
2. Basketball	102	5
3. Soccer	15	7
4. Track	NA	3
5. Wrestling	23	10

Note: The athletic teams consisted of the six players with the lowest sportsmanship rating based on the previous season.

3. Outcome Three

There will be a decrease of one-half the amount of disqualifications and suspensions of the targeted athletes from the previous season. The School Athletic Record Sheet (see Appendix C) would measure the decrease and would indicate that no more than five disqualifications or suspensions, per team, would take place throughout the season.

This outcome was met in that the amount of disqualifications and suspensions of the athletes decreased by one-half the amount from the previous season. Also, no more than five of the athletes, per team, were disqualified or suspended during the current season (see Table 7).



Prior to implementation, a School Athletic Record Sheet (see Appendix C) indicated that the targeted group of athletes totaled 10 disqualifications and 27 suspensions throughout their athletic seasons (see Table 7). After implementation of the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model the amount of disqualifications decreased to 3, and the amount of suspensions decreased to 11. The overall difference in the penalties decreased from 37 to 14 with a difference of 23.

#### 4. Outcome Four

There would be an increase in the conference sportsmanship percentages of the five targeted athletic teams. The Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet (see Appendix D) will indicate that three out of the five teams will receive a sportsmanship percentage that is .4 percent higher than the average of their percentages of the last five years. Also, the desired sportsmanship level of moderate or a percentage of 3.1 to 3.3 will be recorded on the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Rating Scale (see Appendix E) for three out of the five targeted teams.

This outcome was not met in that three out of the five teams did not increase their sportsmanship percentage by .4 percent. However, four teams did increase their percentages and three out of the five teams achieved the desired sportsmanship percentage level of moderate or a 3.1 to 3.3 rating (see Table 8).

Prior to implementation, the sportsmanship percentages and rankings confirmed a low display of sportsmanship conduct associated with the targeted athletic teams. The data from the results indicated the five athletic teams scored below the 3.1 moderate level of acceptable sportsmanship. Also, the five teams had an average of their sportsmanship percentages, of the last five years, in the low level sportsmanship category (see Table 8). The Basketball team had the highest five year sportsmanship average with a 3.05%, followed by the Track team with 3.03%, the Baseball team with 3.01%, the Wrestling team with 2.92%, and the Soccer team with 2.88%. In addition, the five athletic teams were a deciding factor for the high school to have a low overall sportsmanship ranking among the 17 teams that were members in the athletic conference.

After implementation, four out of the five athletic teams increased their sportsmanship percentage and rating, with three teams reaching or surpassing the moderate established sportsmanship level of 3.1%. Also, the high school ranked 13th out of 17 schools for overall sportsmanship tying the highest rating from the past five years. The Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet indicated improvement by four out of the five teams in their sportsmanship average, but none of the five teams met the desired outcome improvement level of .4 percent.

Table 7

Data Collected from the School Athletic Record Sheet

Athletic Team	Penalties	
	Suspensions	Disqualifications
1. Baseball	3	1
2. Basketball	2	1
3. Soccer	0	0
4. Track	3	0
5. Wrestling	3	1

Note: The athletic teams consisted of the six players with the lowest sportsmanship based on the previous season.

Table 8

Data Collected from the Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet

Athletic Team	1996-97 %-Rank	5 Year Average 1991/92-95/96	Percentage Difference	Moderate Level Increase
1. Baseball	3.12- 10	3.01	+.11	Yes
2. Basketball	3.13- 6	3.05	+.08	Yes
3. Soccer	3.00- 9	2.88	+.12	No
4. Track	3.16- 4	3.03	+.13	Yes
5. Wrestling	2.88- 16	2.95	-.09	No
School Ranking	13th			

Note: Established standard for positive sportsmanship is 3.1.

## Discussion

To achieve the specific outcomes in this practicum, it was necessary to re-emphasize the importance of sportsmanship during athletic competition. The concept of morality had to be restated and the interpretation of ethical behavior had to be developed. The purpose and benefits of high school athletic participation was accentuated and related to everyday life so that the athletes could better relate to the correlation. These aspects had to be initially examined so that the students could develop an understanding that would stimulate their thinking and problem solving, thus produce ethical behavior during athletic competition.

The difference between morality and ethics was discussed. It was noted that the two concepts do not signify the same thing in the area of values, but have a fine distinction. Morality can be described as a set of principles or standards designed to serve as guidelines. It is a code which assumes an absolute tone of guidance over life. Morality regulates what people should and should not do in our society. It is the foundation of ethics. Wynne (1990) suggested that children are capable of learning the practice of a moral code and right from wrong, like with the Ten Commandments; however, they may have difficulty in learning ethics or how to behave accordingly.

Ethics is a specific area in the philosophy of morality. It implies a refined code or the effort to apply moral rule in complex and subtle situations. Ethics applies to a code of conduct requiring people to weigh issues, apply prudence, and display considerable self-control. Effective learning of ethics can only take place when there has been a solid foundation in morality (Wynne, 1990). A clear understanding of morality and ethics was established for the athletes.

With insight that an important goal in education is to help children learn to be caring, principled, and responsible individuals, this writer attempted to provide the athletes in his school district with knowledge and opportunities to act on these values in sports competition. The developmental discipline aspect of this practicum began to help the targeted athletes to follow rules and regulations. These athletes became better skilled at solving problems for themselves instead of waiting for authority to rule. Streshly and Schaps (1988) noted that disciplined children are significantly more cooperative and concerned for others, though they are not less competitive or assertive. Providing knowledge to develop character and self-discipline engenders maturity in students and athletes.

This practicum provided substantial information to develop character in the athletes by way of readings, discussions, support, guest speakers, and audio-visual

aids. These materials were broadly conceived and meticulously presented so that they would have a positive effect on the student athletes' attitudes, social skills, and behavior. The athletes began to demonstrate more sophistication in their understanding of sportsmanship and were becoming more effective in resolving problems than before. Also, they were more attentive to their behavior, had alternative plans, and were less likely to act impulsively to conflict (Streshly & Schaps, 1988). A comprehensive concept of ethical behavior with a clear idea of goals, along with providing information and support, was a powerful combination that created a positive moral climate on the playing field.

In many of today's classrooms, gymnasiums, and on many athletic fields the structure of discipline has the operant conditioning theory of behavioralism as its philosophical foundation (Kovar, Ermler, & Mehrhof, 1992). The operant conditioning theory suggests that behavior which occurs in response to external stimuli is shaped by consequences of a person's actions. It is believed that appropriate student actions that are praised or rewarded will be repeated and inappropriate behaviors that are not reinforced will not be repeated. This approach usually helps to suppress inappropriate student behavior only if the teacher or coach is present, if the student is motivated by the reinforcement, or if the student views the consequences as unpleasant. Kovar,

et al. (1992) suggests that operant conditioning is effective as a short term discipline plan but does not achieve the long term goals of having students control their own behavior. Since children can think and act upon their environment and not just react to it, the operant conditioning theory does not provide a complete account for the reasons children behave as they do.

Students benefit most when an environment is created to nurture learning by providing information (Kovar, et al. 1992). By providing vital information on ethical behavior or sportsmanship, the athletes would be able to understand what type of behavior is appropriate under specific conditions and why this behavior is appropriate. Under these conditions, the athletes would be able to choose responsible actions and would grow to become self-disciplined. The theory behind the character development of this practicum was supported by Kovar, et al. (1992) who provided evidence that self-discipline skills can be taught and acquired by using an information providing effort. Their research revealed that this kind of approach would encourage the athletes to become self-disciplined by making their own behavioral choices, experiencing the consequences of their actions, and assessing the appropriateness of certain behaviors. Gordon (1974) warned that to bring about ethical behavior in today's children requires more internal controls, not more external controls. Lickona (1993) supported this warning adding that in

today's society there is an urgent need for the development of internal controls with effective character education. He expressed that the decline of the family, which was traditionally a child's primary moral teacher is, for a growing number of children, failing to perform that role. A second possible impetus is that many young people in general have been adversely affected by poor parenting, the wrong kind of role models, sex, violence, materialism, and peer pressure. Lickona (1993) implied that essential for our survival, adults must promote morality by teaching our youth about such values as respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and civic virtue. He indicated that "these values are not merely subjective preferences but that they have objective worth and a claim on our collective conscience" (p.9).

With a deteriorating social fabric, our schools need to take an active role in character education to develop good ethical behavior in our youth. It is important to structure a sufficient theory of what good character is so that clear and precise goals can be developed. Good character consists of knowing what is proper, desiring the proper, and doing the proper (Lickona, 1993). The educational program then needs to assist the children to understand the essential values of society, help them to commit to these values, and then to center their behavior upon them in their own lives.



According to Lickona (1993) the cognitive aspects of character development centers on six specific powers of rational thought, which is required for full moral maturity. These qualities of thought are awareness of the moral dimensions, knowing moral values and what they require, the power to understand morality in perspective, moral reasoning, decision making, and moral self-knowledge.

This writer's sportsmanship educational model is based on the assumption that most adolescent athletes have the maturity to understand morality and possess the ability to make ethical decisions (Cavazos, 1990 & Lickona, 1993a). If student athletes are taught to effectively problem solve, they will make the right decisions regarding sportsmanship. The unique aspect of the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model is, that it requires the direct teaching of ethics for athletic competition which were collectively decided on. Lickona (1993b) supports directive ethics education, indicating that it helps children to develop the crucial quality of self-control and that a directive approach to promoting ethical behavior is the basis of good character education.

Several post test questions (see Table 1) along with discussions with the targeted athletes indicated that most were aware of the moral aspects in the situations of the previous season that resulted in penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct. The athletes basically knew what should have been done but their thoughts did not

guide their actions. Lickona (1993) noted this process when he indicated that children can be very intelligent and aware about matters of right and wrong and still choose wrong. The reasons for the reactions according to the coaches, athletes, and this writer's observations included, embarrassment, provocation, and the heat of competition. Other reasons included frustration due to pressure, lack of discipline or self-control, and because they would not suffer any consequences of the unethical behavior. Additional reasons, although not extensive were due to image, not thinking of the consequences, to test the system, and because of prejudice. In an effort to understand this thought-action process, it was important to focus on the crucial emotional side of character development because it serves as the bridge which connects the child's judgment and behavior (Lickona, 1993). Many children are aware of the moral aspects of issues or situations. Basically, they know what they should do and many feel strongly about it, yet they fail to translate moral judgment and feelings into effective ethical behavior. The emotional side of character development includes qualities of consciousness, self-respect, empathy, willingness to correct moral failings, and self-control. For this reason, it is important that character developmental programs focus on both the intellectual and emotional side of morality. Ethical conduct draws upon three additional qualities of competency in listening,

communicating and cooperating, the will to mobilize judgment and energy, and the habit to respond to situations in an ethical manner (Lickona, 1993). Once a comprehensive concept of character is identified, there needs to be a comprehensive approach to develop it and focus on the practices that supported the aims of the professed values desired.

Character education programs could be much more effective when certain criteria are involved. First, the teaching of values such as responsibility and respect must be purposeful and direct. Direct instruction, where students hear and see the words, learn their meanings, identify appropriate behaviors, and apply the values is a key aspect (Brooks & Kann, 1993). Direct instruction builds a foundation for more advanced learning. Secondly, students must know exactly what is expected of them if they are to engage in appropriate behavior. Visual reinforcements of proper ethical behavior illustrates and reinforces productive behavior. Visual presentations are especially essential for the visual learner who requires seeing a problem before they can critically think to solve it. Also, negative language such as "don't be late for practice" should be translated into positive language such as "be on time for practice." Lastly, as Brooks and Kann (1993) suggested, student participation is vital in effective character development programs. The students or athletes need to develop a sense of

ownership by participating in the process of framing goals in order to achieve them. They also indicate that character education programs are most effective and enduring when parents are involved and kept aware of what is being taught.

The educational needs of the student athletes in the athletic program had to be met in order to deal with the growing challenges of a changing society. This practicum was designed to adequately address the growing decline of sportsmanship among the high school male athletes. Through this practicum, high school character education was developed to meet the requirements of today's adolescents involved in athletics. In addition, the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model was developed to emphasize the particular behavioral traits necessary to become a good sportsman. It educated and prepared the athletes for their responsibility of proper ethical conduct on the field, providing both positive and negative examples.

Prior to implementation, several factors were present among the athletes which limited their preparation for proper ethical behavior and for tomorrow's competitive and cooperative society. The students were not provided with important and vital information, they lacked effective problem solving skills, and they had few social skills for effectively working together. Many of the athletes indicated on the pre test (see Table 1) that they felt neither proper ethics nor sportsmanship was important

in high school sports and that winning had a much higher priority than the values of fairness, honesty, and integrity. This moral reasoning was seen in conduct with the high number of penalties and in the low level sportsmanship rating by the athletic conference.

According to Durbin (1986), there is supportive data which suggests that high school sports participation can develop human relations as well as physical and emotional development. He also noted that most educators believe that athletic participation helps to develop basic values such as self-respect, self-esteem, and competitive spirit along with providing development in the area of teamwork and with the experience of how to win and lose appropriately. These life attributes are as important in a child's total preparation for being a productive citizen as their academic achievement.

Physical skills and talent can provide a person with attention but these skills alone will not make the individual a complete person or a respected athlete. There is another important aspect to sports participation that is valued and respected by many. It is called sportsmanship. Sweeny (1996) described sportsmanship as the ability to balance competitiveness and lead one's life with class on and off the playing field. The National Federation of State High School Associations view sportsmanship as the qualities which are characterized by generosity and concern for others. The association defines it as a

commitment to fair play, integrity, and ethical behavior. Webster's Dictionary defines sportsmanship as the fine qualities or conduct befitting a good sportsman. A sportsman being a person who plays fair and can lose without complaint or win without boasting. It is basically an easy task to define these terms but to get high school athletes to recognize and respect the need for sportsmanship is difficult. When addressing the reasons for the growth in unsportsmanlike conduct in interscholastic sporting events, a focus on the effect that the demonstrated behavior of college and professional athletes have on high school students needs to be examined. Rochman (1997) has indicated that "with many of the professional players embarking on seemingly endless ego trips, arguing with officials, taunting opposing players, and placing winning above all else the task of emphasizing sportsmanship becomes even more difficult" (p.19). Many professional and collegiate athletes are poor role models and are providing poor examples of what kind of behavior is appropriate in athletic competition.

Today, the upsurge in unsportsmanlike conduct among adolescent athletes in interscholastic athletics has prompted a need for the corrective action of this practicum. The aim of this action is to re-emphasize the original intent of high school sports which is to teach values, proper ethics, and integrity necessary to compete successfully in athletic competition and in society.

Most states in our nation have adopted a policy which mandates that any player ejected from an interscholastic event will be suspended from participating in the next two contests at the same level. The tracking of ejections indicates that this disqualification-suspension policy has not been enough of a deterrent or effective in improving sportsmanship (Rochman, 1997). Many of the special programs that schools have implemented in an effort to improve sportsmanship are not effective. In the writer's athletic conference, like in many of the athletic programs throughout the nation, there are two hospitality meetings or conferences per year, which gather certain student athletes together in an effort to build working relationships. The objective is to provide the athletes a chance to exchange ideas, converse, and begin friendships which they can build upon during the competitive season. Through informal interviews, this writer revealed that nine out of ten student athletes who attended these sportsmanship gatherings, indicated that they were very ineffective in improving sportsmanship. Most of the athletes noted that there was very little inter-group and intra-group communication and that friendships with other teams did not occur. Other unsuccessful programs consisted of featuring posters and banners or providing the athletes with extrinsic rewards such as certificates, plaques, and trophies. Schaps and Lewis (1991) have suggested that these types of rewards actually undermine

intrinsic motivation and thoughtfulness in students. Much of their evaluation data indicated that projects which de-emphasize rewards seem to enhance students' higher-order achievement. This research provides substantial evidence that a child's social and ethical development can be fostered more effectively with intrinsic motivation than with extrinsic rewards. Intrinsic motivation seems to more effectively promote learning and may be more appropriate to the intelligent, humane, and engaging aspect that public education now aspires to become. The N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model of this practicum was designed to develop intrinsic motivation in the athletes to produce ethical behavior. Research by Scherer (1990) has indicated that intrinsic motivation is a more powerful force in promoting learning than extrinsic rewards. Yet our educational system, especially the athletic programs, rely heavily on trophies, public recognition, and rankings. Scherer (1990) warned that these types of awards result in our youth being less successful in ethical conduct or sportsmanship and more concerned with winning. Hignite (1986) indicated that an important ingredient of effective teaching is presenting learning in a way that the children will learn for the sake of learning and not for an award or an extrinsic reason. Unless a child sees the value of learning as it effects their life, it is unlikely that intrinsic motivation will occur.



When the targeted athletes' ethical behavior began to improve other team members began to acknowledge and praise them. This reinforcement process began to stimulate ego-integrative motives in the athletes (Davidson and O'Leary, 1990). They started to develop a sense of power or competence in their own ability to think, reason, and problem solve. This motive allowed the athletes to contribute even more to their effort and to the group's effort of sportsmanship. As group members began to communicate, network, and share their ideas they began to develop mutual respect for each other which crossed the boundaries of race, social class, and ethnicity. Also, as partnerships developed in the process of teaching and learning, the disruptive athletes were viewed as adversaries and did not receive the support of the other team members (Glasser, 1990).

There are usually moments of both celebration and disappointment in an athlete's competitive season. It is the individual's responsibility to consistently display a disposition of good sportsmanship behavior. Proper ethics by an athlete or by a team is a process that must be deliberately instilled for results to occur. Peterson (1996) reported that proper sportsmanship does not just happen by chance but is an ongoing concept that is intentionally designed.

As the athletes began to acquire the vital information on sportsmanship from this practicum, they began to

organize their thoughts. As they discussed and shared the information with the other members of their team, they began to analyze the information along with their thoughts. The results were an increase in knowledge and an understanding and appreciation for proper ethical conduct on the playing field. An increase of knowledge brings about awareness which can stimulate thinking to produce more acceptable and productive actions. Connecting athletes to vital information is critical if they are to become well informed and competent problem solvers in the complex society in which we live and the world that lies ahead. The direction of this practicum was to place the athletes in an educational framework by providing them with vital information, support, and examples of proper ethics. With these resources, higher order thinking would occur, stimulating the athletes' problem solving skills, which would reflect on more positive behavior. Whenever possible, proper sportsmanship behavior should be expressed in behavioral terms, which allows for assessment through observation (Wandzilak & Potter, 1986).

Outcome number 4 was the only outcome that was not met during the implementation of this practicum. Out of the five targeted athletic teams, four increased their sportsmanship ranking, but not by the desired .4 percent. The wrestling team was the only team that did not have an increase, dropping by .09 percent from their five year

average. The desired .4 percent increase in the sportsmanship averages was too high of an amount to seek in relationship to team improvement within the athletic conference. A more reasonable increase would have been .1 percent or .2 percent. Overall, positive improvement occurred in the sportsmanship rankings, although not extensive. Also, three out of the five teams reached the moderate level of sportsmanship on the N.H.S. Sportsmanship Scale. The wrestling team and the soccer team were the two teams that did not reach the 3.1 percentage required for a moderate level ranking (see Table 8). The .4 percentage increase in team sportsmanship may have been an unrealistic amount of an increase due to several reasons. First, to acquire a .4 percent increase, a team would have had to demonstrate an extraordinary amount of positive behavior in order for the opposing coaches to rate them with a significant increase. Second, the rating system, which is based on the opposing coaches' ability to effectively evaluate, does not have guidelines to follow and the judgment of the coaches is not always objective. Subjectivity takes place many times, especially when a team loses a game or when one particular player's unethical act is a reflection on the entire team. Isenberg (1990) indicated that many times there are nonexistent guidelines when evaluating causing more subjectivity than objectivity. The coaches needed to be more objective in their judgments of the opposing teams in order to make

the sportsmanship evaluation process more consistent. Finally, the athletic conference's rating system combines the sportsmanship ratings of the players, coaches, and spectators. The athletes could have had a season displaying proper behavior but have a low sportsmanship rating due to the unethical behavior of the coaches or the spectators. It is this writer's conclusion, through observations and interviews with coaches, that a team or a school's reputation on sportsmanship has much to do with the coaches being subjective in the evaluation. Schools that have a poor reputation of sportsmanship seem to receive low ratings even if their players have displayed a relatively ethical playing season. Also, as a team builds their reputation as a winner, their nature may become more aggressive although ethical. This relationship may create animosity or resentment from the other teams and coaches. Therefore, a coach's opinion may be subjective when making a sportsmanship judgment toward an opposing team.

The N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model of this practicum also emphasized the role of the athletic coach in acting as an example for the players. It educated and prepared the coaches for their role and responsibility of being an effective role model. This implementation factor had a direct and positive influence on the outcomes of this practicum, especially outcomes #2 and #3, which focused on the decrease of violations and penalties

associated with unsportsmanlike behavior. The coaches set acceptable standards of behavior and made a reasonable effort to hold the athletes accountable for meeting those standards.

Prior to implementation, informal interviews with the coaches indicated that most of the staff lacked the proper training or did not have adequate insight into the importance of educating their athletes on sportsmanship. It was the opinion of many of the coaches that value development is a natural by-product of the athletic experience. Unfortunately, there is little objective evidence which supports this belief. For most of the coaches, developing values through athletics was of secondary importance. Also, many viewed the teaching of values as being in conflict with winning and neglected the importance of teaching ethics altogether. Still others, who made an attempt at educating in this area, were not acquainted with a process to teach values and took a casual or aimless attempt at it.

The student athletes of this project represented a diverse collection of talents, personalities, and aspirations. To develop character in some it was only necessary to raise the standards and expectations. For others, direction and continued support was required while a third group, who perceived the high standards as unrealistic or unattainable, responded initially with anger, defeat,

and indifference. It was the third group that required the most extensive guidance to develop their character.

An important aspect of this practicum was to break the traditional pattern of recognizing only the athletes who excelled at their sport. All of the athletes needed to receive deserved praise and recognition. Emphasizing the positive is a contagious success cycle that can improve the achievement and performance of children (Grossnickle, 1996). High expectations were set and were effectively communicated by the coaches to the players. Spending the majority of time focusing on the good conduct resulted in increased student motivation, self-esteem, and success for most. It was also important that the coaches varied their teaching methods to regularly motivate the athletes.

In this practicum, the cognitive developmental approach to child development (Piaget, 1932) and the moral developmental research of Kohlberg (1968) were applied to athletics and sportsmanship. In addition, the social theory (Bandura, 1977) was also applied in relation to the role of the athletic coach in modeling the ethical behavior that was developing in the athletes. This theory suggests that coaches are key models to our youth, provided they are competent in their role. Since coaches have influential positions, it is important that they demonstrate or model a pattern of life the youth may choose to emulate. The high school coach is a very influential adult who should serve as an example for the athletes

displaying proper conduct and a high standard of sportsmanship. Coaches have the responsibility to react ethically to all situations that may arise. The coaches in this writer's high school needed to understand that their actions play an important role in modeling behavior for the athletes and in setting parameters for what is acceptable or unacceptable conduct. According to Landfried (1989), children cannot shrink their responsibilities if adults do not enable them to do so. For that reason, it was important that the coaches apply some of the social learning theory to their interactions with the athletes. This process was accomplished by modeling high, socially acceptable standards of performance and reinforcing the fact that learning and personal growth come from hard work, discipline, and persistence. Hall (1959) revealed a basic theory that coaches communicate by their manners and behaviors. Duel (1996) supported this idea adding that coaches are leaders of our youth and must always remember that what they say and do has a profound effect on their athletes.

The development of proper ethics and sportsmanship depends mainly on the goals of the sports program and the philosophy of the coach. If the teachers we call coaches follow the rules of the sport and stress proper ethics, the athletes are more likely to develop these behaviors. The coaches who do not deal with their athletes' unfair play are teaching them that poor sports-

manship is acceptable. Coaches have to lead by example and help design the models of proper ethics and sportsmanship of the future.

Coaches who allow their players to be irresponsible without providing appropriate consequences for poor behavior are considered "enablers" (Landfried, 1989). The coaches in this writer's high school needed to re-examine their methods and approaches to assess the degree to which they inadvertently encouraged and reinforced irresponsible behaviors that essentially undermined their athletes' behaviors. Many of these coaches reinforced inappropriate attitudes when they accepted poor behavior from their athletes. Not carrying out consequences for poor conduct caused confusion in the athletes' understanding of what responsibilities properly go with their role. The coaches needed to actively attempt to increase their players' responsibility and accountability for ethical participation in competition. They were instructed that they could effectively start this process by modeling first rate standards of performance and by reinforcing consequences for inappropriate behavior. The coaches needed to take conscious steps to set high standards for their athletes and hold them accountable for meeting them (Landfried, 1989). Most of the targeted athletes indicated that they felt it was important for the coaches to show their sincerity and concern for the players' development of ethics and sportsmanship through their daily actions.



Studies by Williams (1993) reinforced this belief suggesting that most students feel that the teacher must follow the same values themselves in order for the values to be effectively taught to the student. Schwartz (1990) has noted that teachers have a strong impact on their students in the same manner that the principal has a significant role on the effectiveness of the school. Certainly, there should be no doubt about the importance and the impact of the coach on the life of the athletes. Coaches have the potential to change an athlete's life or lead them in a constructive or positive direction. This is why coaches should be compassionate, encouraging, and dedicated to their sport and to their players. They should give respect and inspire its return. The coach should teach skills, self-esteem, sportsmanship, and model concern and caring. Coaches should work to teach the lifelong benefits that participating in sports can provide. Scherer (1990) indicated that a coach should be that special person who the young athletes aspire to emulate and whose inspiration and example will be remembered as the athlete matures into adulthood.

The ultimate goal of this practicum was to assist the sports program to produce well-rounded citizens who are better prepared to face the challenges of adult life as a result of their athletic experiences. Effective high school sports programs that have trained coaches with a clear understanding of their full responsibilities

are essential to the students' athletic achievement as well as their emotional and social success. To be an effective coach is to accept the responsibilities of leadership, role modeling, positive attitudes, academic emphasis, and continued growth as a professional (McDonald, 1986). Today, the emphasis and guidance on sportsmanship and proper ethical behavior, on and off the practice field, is an essential and important responsibility for all coaches. If coaches expect less than the full responsibility from our youth, then they are not committed to their effective role as an educator. If the coaches or the athletic programs falter, we cannot expect our athletes to stand up to the pressures of competitive sports and display proper sportsmanship.

Children are not automatically moral or ethical. It takes much effort on the part of adults to help children attain their full humanity. People draw upon the ideas they learned from childhood about what is moral and what is immoral (Cavazo, 1990). Regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, people can hold the attributes of honesty, virtue, equality, courage, fair play, and tolerance in common.

The athletic program in this writer's high school needed to effectively instruct the athletes on morality and ethics so they could assume conscious control of their lives and respect rules and regulations. However, this instruction needs to begin at a young age prior to the

high school level. Honig (1990) suggested that coaches need to assist athletes at a young age to understand and control some of their negative impulses and to enhance their moral sense and good habits. Many children have a difficult time controlling negative or self-gratifying behaviors. Honig (1990) notes there are four stages to controlling behavior. The first manner by which a certain amount of impulse reaction is controlled is with adult presence. Next, many children will control their impulses because it is in their self-interest. The third stage of behavior control implies that children restrain certain behaviors because they wish to belong to a group. At this stage, children are mainly conforming due to peer influence. If they act properly and internalize the group's values it would prevent them from being isolated from the group.

In the final stage of moral development, children consciously choose a moral set of standards. This commitment to a moral direction is the insight people need if they are to achieve their humanity and individuality. Failure to obtain this level will commit many people to a lower moral existence and leave them vulnerable to negative peer influence (Honig, 1990). Today, children come to school from a variety of backgrounds that effects their interactions and behaviors. According to Calabrese (1990), "Young people face a society that no longer serves as a protector but often encourages abuse and exploitation"

(p.11). It is in this environment that today's schools must transmit democratic principles and proper morality and ethical behavior.

Many of the schools in our nation understand the importance of including morality in the curriculum. A considerable amount of effort has been put forth in an attempt to instill the foundation of a set of principles for the students to live by. Philosophically, most children know right from wrong, but applying this philosophy to behavior or using these principles in practice is difficult. A main reason for this difficulty is because many adolescents lack the necessary preparation to effectively apply proper behavior to a code of morality (Wanne, 1990). This preparation requires them to use higher order thinking to weigh issues, to problem solve, and then to display self-control and apply appropriate conduct. Wanne (1990) suggests that adolescents need to be educated with direct and affirmative instruction on specific behaviors that are proper and socially acceptable. The coaches of adolescent athletes need to establish a set of principles or guidelines, put them in writing, clearly transmit them, and then instill ethical behavior or the effort to apply the moral rule. An additional important step to effectively produce ethical conduct in athletes is to promote and consistently enforce the established types of behavior with an effective system of unpleasant consequences.

Teaching children to be well rounded athletes involves instructing them on how to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat. It involves helping the child to realize that there is more to sports than just talent and the final score. There is an emotional and social side to sports participation that creates an even larger arena. Duel (1996) expressed that this larger arena is one in which the final score is not merely measured by points for and against, but also with morality, ethics, and integrity.

When high school athletes show respect, consideration, concern, cooperation, and self-control during interscholastic athletic competition, ethical behavior is reflected from a moral code and higher order thinking. When proper ethics or sportsmanship is demonstrated, the school, the community, and our society becomes a more civil, generous, and kind place to live in. In sports participation, as in society, there is a need to reflect a commitment to the enhancement of the individual, the team, and to the larger domain or the sport itself. Then, there is a need to transmit these values to future generations if we are to maintain ethical behavior and sportsmanship in interscholastic athletic competition.

#### Recommendations

There are seven recommendations that seem appropriate at this time.

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1. Athletic programs should obtain a collective philosophical design of moral and ethical codes for the athletes. This will prevent serious barriers that may prohibit the success of incorporating specific behavioral traits into the character developmental plan.
2. For better behavioral results, coaches should spend adequate time introducing the athletes to what sportsmanship is and how they can benefit from it.
3. A clear and precise definition of morality and ethics, and their relationship to sportsmanship should be established. The students need to be able to connect their athletic experiences to other life situations.
4. Ethical behavior involves choices. A better interpretation of the emotional side to decision making or the bridge between morality and ethics needs to occur in order to understand the thought-behavior process.
5. Extensive involvement of the parents in the educational process of the athletes' behavior may be an effective reinforcement factor for their ethical conduct.
6. Video and other types of technology should be used when appropriate to enhance the sportsmanship educational design.
7. All coaches should receive professional training to understand the importance of sportsmanship, their role in the process, and to develop effective methods and approaches to instill ethics in their athletes.

### Dissemination

A very positive response was given to this writer by the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and the principal of the high school. A copy of this practicum will be provided to these school officials to be viewed and then kept on file.

Also, responding positively to this practicum were several district educators, coaches, parents, and students. Because of the overwhelming positive response, this N.H.S. Sportsmanship Educational Model will be implemented into the existing athletic program beginning in the Fall of 1997.

This writer plans to disseminate this practicum to all of the members of the physical education department on all three levels, elementary, middle school, and high school. A copy will be sent to the head coaches and assistant coaches in the county who were aware of the project and showed an interest and concern. This practicum will be sent to the 17 head coaches within the athletic conference and to other area educational professionals who this writer has contact with. Also, as the president of the State's Wrestling Coaches Association-Region IV, this sportsmanship practicum will be sent to the head coaches of the 45 membership schools, including the high school where his brother is employed as a teacher of the same subject matter and the head coach of the same sport. In addition, this practicum report will be turned into a journal article for educational publication.

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## Appendix A

### N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire

## N.H.S. Athlete Sportsmanship Questionnaire

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Respond to the following statements by indicating the rating you feel is the most appropriate. Number 1 is the lowest level response, while number 5 is the highest level response. Please think about each statement and answer it as honest as possible.

Question Questions	Response				
	1 Do not agree	2 Slight- ly agree	3 Agree	4 Strong- ly agree	5 Total- ly agree
1. Last season, did you regularly cheat in any way to get ahead in your sport?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Last season, did you regularly use profanity in practices or games?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Last season, did you regularly disrespect your coach verbally or actively?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Last season, did you regularly use unnecessary roughness or mouth-off to your opponent?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Last season, did you regularly refuse to shake hands or refuse to engage in the pre-game or post-game activities?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Last season, did you regularly disrespect the game official?	1	2	3	4	5
7. An athlete's desire to win should be at any moral cost.	1	2	3	4	5

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. It is acceptable for an injured athlete to express anger or pain with profanity.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. It is acceptable for an athlete to ignore the direction of a coach if they do not agree with the directive.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. It is acceptable for an athlete to use obscene gestures toward the spectators if the spectators initiated provocative language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Last season, did you regularly follow the rules and regulations established for the sport by the state association?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Last season, did you regularly display appropriate sportsmanship behavior and ethics in sports?                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Last season, did you regularly communicate, cooperate, and give allegiance to your coach?                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Sportsmanship and proper ethics are extremely important in high school athletics.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Last season, I was a good role model, on and off the playing field.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Last season, I won without boasting, lost without excuses, and I never quit.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. The moral values of fairness, honesty, and responsibility are more important in relationship to winning.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. An athlete should not, regardless of the quantity, use any beverage containing alcohol or use any controlled substance (drugs).      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. An athlete should not, regardless of the quantity, use any tobacco product to smoke or chew.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. The use of steroids by a high school athlete to enhance their strength, speed, or performance, reflects poor sportsmanship behavior. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



## Appendix B

### Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet

# Student Athlete Behavioral Sheet

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete	Penalties		
	Warning	Fouls	Technical Fouls

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

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## Appendix C

### School Athletic Record Sheet

## School Athletic Record Sheet

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete	Disqualifications	Suspensions
---------	-------------------	-------------

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

## Appendix D

### Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet

## Athletic Conference Sportsmanship Ranking Sheet

Percentage (scale: 0-4)					
Athletic Team	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
	% -Rank	% -Rank	% -Rank	% -Rank	% -Rank
1. _____	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
2. _____	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
3. _____	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
4. _____	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
5. _____	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
6. _____	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %

The School's Sportsmanship Ranking:  
(17 Schools)

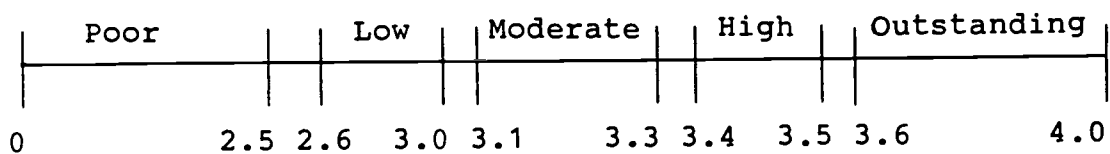
_____th	_____th	_____th	_____th	_____th
1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96

## Appendix E

### N.H.S. Team Sportsmanship Ranking Scale

## N.H.S. Team Sportsmanship Ranking Scale

## Ranking Level



## Ranking Percentage





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